

Names

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Summary: Amber was used to being called names, and had always ignored them. There comes a point, though, at which feigning ignorance becomes impossible.

Names

This story has some strong, offensive language in it. Of course I don't approve of it, and I certainly don't use it, but there are times when it's the only thing that works in writing. So, just be warned. I don't mean to offend anyone, of course, and I apologize in advance if you take it that way.

* * *

>Princess, prima donna, brat.

Amber was used to being called names. She had been raised on them; her mother called her them as a child, hurtful names that had left young Amber's face burning and her heart breaking. However, she had learned early in life that names were only things someone said, they couldn't hurt you. No matter how mean they were, or how cruel they seemed at the time, they were just words. At a very young age, she taught herself to believe that these names weren't true, and that they were just a minor inconvenience in an otherwise perfect life.

Of course, Amber's life had never been very hard. Certainly, she'd been born to a vain, somewhat insensitive mother, and a father who hadn't lived past her fifth birthday, but she couldn't complain much. She had always shopped at the fanciest stores, worn the best dresses, slept on the silkiest sheets that were imported from the finest cities in Europe. Even as a young girl, she was admired by others. The children in her pre-school class would clamor to place their mats by her at nap time, just to have a shot to be next to the impossibly charming Amber Von Tussle. All through her school years, she could rest assured knowing that there was always someone who was envying

her, admiring her for all of the fabulous things she had. It was an odd sense of accomplishment, and the only thing she could actually claim. She'd never made above average grades in her classes, never tried out for the cheerleading squad (though she was convinced in her own mind that if she ever so much as glanced in their general direction they'd make her squad leader without blinking an eye) she had never done anything particularly spectacular.

Lucky, spoiled, admired.

That's what they had called her when she'd started to date Link, because that's exactly what she pretended to be. All of the girls wanted him, all of the boys wanted to be him, and Amber had him. She would force that smirk to her face as she paraded him down the hall, teased him with gentle kisses as they waited for the school bus. She had everyone fooled, including Link. She could smile that evil smile, and make everyone believe that she had fallen desperately, head-over-heels in love with him. Sometimes, she could even convince herself of it. Sometimes, when their bodies were pressed against each other, and she found herself sweaty and panting, she could convince herself that this was right, because this was what she was expected to be doing. She was supposed to want Link, to want to feel his fingers sinking into her skin, his hips pressing against hers as his mouth covered hers in one of the sloppy kisses she'd become accustomed to with him. And yet, it wasn't what she wanted. She didn't want to be crushed beneath him, forced to pretend that he was satisfying her, when actually, he made her feel nothing.

There was a reason Link was the first boyfriend she'd ever had. She'd never let anyone know that of course; she'd always said she'd been dating a boy from another school, one who was older, more experienced. She'd always talked about him to her friends, and they'd always wanted to meet this mysterious stranger. Of course, they couldn't, because he didn't exist. He was simply filler; he covered all of the empty bases that were beginning to make others wonder about her.

She couldn't help it, but she'd just never found boys that deliciously appealing. What was so enticing about a gender that burped loudly, swore religiously and didn't even try to hide their crudeness? It wasn't that she found girls irresistible either, at least not all of them.

She hated that she felt this certain way about Shelley, and hated that it was often her name that she wanted to moan when Link would try to please her. Hated that it was Shelley she wanted to be with, because she knew it was so utterly wrong. Her mother would disown her, they would be kicked off the show, abandoned. And still, though she knew those, and many more unforeseeable consequences awaited her if she ever even tried to begin a relationship with the other girl, there was too much temptation behind it.

It happened so quickly that she couldn't really pinpoint the exact moment that she and Shelley went from some strange sort of friendship to much, much more. It seemed that she had just barely begun to try and explain her feelings to Shelley, and the other girl had her pushed against the wall, her mouth ravaging hers. Their lips met in a frenzied clash, and she felt herself groaning, pushing against her, begging her to give her more. It was exactly what she'd been

looking for her entire life; that sort of unconditional acceptance that she couldn't find anywhere else. Shelley understood that, and it allowed them to form an inseparable bond.

Their relationship was taboo; neither of them pretended to think otherwise. They knew they couldn't kiss in public, couldn't hold hands walking down the street. Amber took great pride in introducing Shelley as her girlfriend, and no one ever assumed that she was being literal when she said the words. However, the names that people had always called her slowly began to worsen in severity, though she tried to pretend she didn't realize it.

Dirty, disgusting, immoral.

That's what they started to call her when it became increasingly difficult to hide their relationship. When they wanted to walk down the street without having to lie about who they loved, and when they started questioning exactly why it was so wrong for them to want to be together. Shelley was more amazing than Amber could ever imagine a man being. She was delicate, and sensitive, and yet, she felt so safe in her arms. It was the first time she'd ever really let herself love another person. And just because it was another girl instead of a boy; why did that matter? Why should it have mattered to anyone else who she had decided to love? For some reason, though, it seemed to, and everyone around them began to watch them with dark, narrowed eyes. Their friends began to alienate them, and though it hurt, Amber convinced herself that the only thing that really mattered was that she was with Shelley, and she was happy. It would have been so easy if it really was that simple, though.

Lesbian, queer, dyke.

The words were directed at them in whispers as they walked down the hallways; carved into their lockers at school, spray painted on their houses. Neither of them were completely sure how, but word of their relationship had gotten around school, and the consequences were dire. Soon, they lost their identities. They were no longer Amber and Shelley. They were the lesbians. They were no longer council members, or students. They were fags.

It was bad enough, certainly, that they were tormented by their peers, shunned by the girls they had once called best friends. It didn't help that even their teachers had begun to regard them different, but Amber could have stood that. She could have accepted the fact that they were from a different era; they didn't understand what she and Shelley had was more beautiful, more wholesome than any boy-girl relationship in that school. All they saw were two girls, and that was wrong. No gray area, no questions asked.

It wasn't until Amber heard her own mother calling her those names that reality hit her, and hard. Shelley had become a broken shell of the sassy, vibrant girl she had once been. She hung her head in school, and Amber pretended not to notice that she often cried in the bathroom, where no one else could see her; no one could see how broken she had become. It filled Amber with a sense of dread; knowing that she had caused the one person she loved this insufferable pain. It was too much to bear. She tried not to notice that Shelley was losing weight at an alarming speed, and tried to tell herself that everything would be fine, and good, just like it had been once.

They'd be able to go out in public again soon, without fearing for their lives.

But the bad always gets worse, and this was no exception. People became infinitely hateful toward them, if only because they shared something that no one else could understand. Shelley became indifferent toward her, and Amber assumed it was a self-preservation technique that kept her from feeling the pain of the verbal attacks they were forced to endure. It was the fear of not knowing who would be waiting outside for them when they left for school in the morning. It was the overwhelming pressure from everyone, telling them that they were disgusting, filthy girls who didn't deserve to live. They were accused of making a mockery of genuine relationships, and no one even bothered to realize that Amber and Shelley had been trying to have a genuine relationship the entire time.

Weak, pathetic, spineless.

Those were the names Shelley had called her the day Amber had ended their relationship. She was too weak to go on fighting, too pathetic to care, too spineless to stand up for what they had, even if it was deeper than any of them could ever understand.

And for the first time, Amber let herself believe that the names she was called were true.

End
file.